

Michigan Schools Make Healthy Changes

Coordinated School Health Teams Make Positive Changes!

Healthier Environments for Over 26,400 Students!

Forty-seven Michigan schools with a total enrollment of 26,437 students in 27 counties are experiencing a healthier school environment. Each school formed a coordinated school health team (CSHT) and completed the School Health Index (SHI) or Michigan's preferred assessment tool – the Healthy School Action Tool (HSAT).^{*} The Michigan Departments of Education and Community Health awarded these schools with grants averaging \$1,000 to make changes in their school environments from 1999-2004.

^{*}Visit www.mihealthtools.org/schools to learn more about the HSAT.



Schools Successfully CHANGED their School Environment

A survey was used to collect the successes of these school grants. Thirty-eight schools (81%) completed the survey. All of these schools made at least one change and a total of 177 changes were made (a per-school average of 4.7). Fifteen schools (40%) reported making **five or more** improvements to their school environment.

RESPONSE OPTIONS	PERCENT
Increased awareness about the importance of offering healthy choices	90%
School meals have improved	61%
Students have more nutrition education	55%
Classroom parties have healthy choices	47%
A la carte choices are healthier	45%
The school improvement plan includes a focus on healthy eating and physical activity	40%
Food is not being offered as a reward	37%
More opportunities for physical activity (daily recess or before/after school)	34%
Teachers including more physical activity in classrooms	32%

Other areas of change included: link between classroom nutrition education and the cafeteria (32%), more minutes of physical education class (16%), and recess offered before lunch (11%).

Schools Sustained and Expanded Positive Changes!

Thirty-six (95%) schools were able to continue or expand changes initiated from their grant. The most common activities that "lived on" were increased opportunities for student physical activity (especially walking clubs), improved school meals (healthier choices, more fruits/veggies), healthier vending options, staff wellness and classroom nutrition education.

"The grant and CSHT provided an opportunity for people to voice their opinion and it got people talking. There was complete administrative buy-in so we got everything that we needed. Having support of administration is very important in order to see results."

Keep Up the Healthy Movement

Schools cannot solve the problem of unhealthy lifestyles of students, however, they can help students adopt and maintain healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Join the movement in Michigan to create healthy learning environments, and visit www.mihealthtools.org today to begin completing HSAT.



Three important key points were identified by schools that helped make MULTIPLE CHANGES (10+):

1. Great (committed) CSHT
2. Administration was on board
3. Worked on small changes



Schools that INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY did so by:

- Adding two gym teachers and starting a physical education program
- Increasing physical education class from 47 minutes to 55
- Encouraging students to ride bikes to school; providing bike helmets to all students; purchasing bike racks
- Allowing students to skateboard or rollerblade in the hallways before school and at recess
- Adding a spring walking club
- Having scheduled times for exercising and playing active games in classrooms (Motown in Motion and Brain Breaks)
- Adding basketball, ballroom dancing, cheerleading and floor hockey to after school activities
- Having morning warm-up exercises

- Purchasing ski equipment
- Giving pedometers to third and fourth graders
- Improving the playground
- Adding walking trails

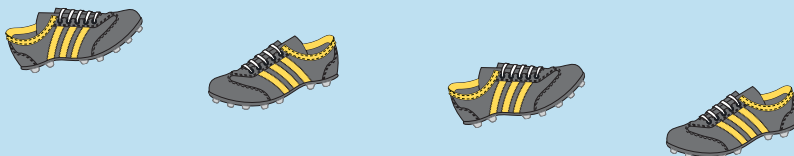
Schools that IMPROVED SCHOOL MEALS are now offering:

- Healthier options are at the beginning of the lunch line
- Wheat bread wrap on "deli day" (students make own sandwich)
- Pre-packaged carrots and peaches
- The school lunch includes fresh fruits/veggies daily on salad bar
- Breakfast in the classroom one day per month
- Fresh fruits on cereal for breakfast
- Fewer sugary foods such as pop tarts and sweetened cereals

- Chicken nuggets that are baked
- Taste testing to try new foods
- More fresh fruits

Schools are doing MORE CLASSROOM NUTRITION EDUCATION by:

- Integrating cooking lessons into each class
- Partnering with the county food bank to provide nutrition education and taste testing for nutrition classes
- Increasing collaboration between food service staff and the health teacher in the classroom



TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT:

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